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Millennium promotional campaign

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 54/82 B of 6 December 1999, the General Assembly recalled its resolution 53/202 of 17 December 1998 concerning the Millennium Assembly and Millennium Summit of the United Nations, and encouraged the Secretary-General to formulate and implement an effective public information strategy so as to ensure that the Summit would enjoy broad international support.

2. To implement this mandate, the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat is undertaking a promotional campaign that aims not only to publicize the Millennium Summit but also to use the occasion of the millennium to better connect the peoples of the world to the United Nations.

3. The Millennium Summit will provide Member States with a forum to revisit and strengthen the United Nations with a view to meeting the needs and challenges of the twenty-first century. In keeping with those goals, the millennium promotional campaign aims to depict an Organization that is future-oriented, dynamic and indispensable. The strategic vision is of a United Nations that works with people everywhere on issues that are expected to shape the planet's future and directly affect their lives.

II. Building momentum towards the Millennium Summit

A. Outreach related to millennium events at the end of 1999

4. To publicize and build momentum towards the Millennium Summit, all avenues are being exploited to disseminate messages about the upcoming Summit and its issues.

5. The intense media interest in chronicling the end-of-the-year millennium celebrations worldwide provided an early opportunity to position the United Nations as an important player at this milestone. A successful advance campaign conducted by the Department of Public Information focused on giving high visibility to the Secretary-General's millennium message. The magnitude of the resulting coverage made this one of the most widely heard statements ever by the Secretary-General. Outreach activities included:

(a) The Department distributed by satellite the Secretary-General's pre-recorded video millennium message, translated into the six official languages, for worldwide broadcast starting on 30 December 1999. Multiple satellite feeds were arranged, and some 2,600 broadcasters were alerted. In addition, over 250 video cassettes were sent to 124 United Nations offices

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around the world for use by national broadcasters and directly to many selected television stations. United Nations information centres reported that, from among their media contacts, the message was broadcast by over 190 television and radio programmes in 40 countries;

(b) The Secretary-General's two millennium articles, entitled "The meaning of international community" and "We the peoples: The United Nations and human rights in the twenty-first century", were distributed through the information centres. Together with the Secretary-General's message, they were reproduced in over 200 newspapers around the world;

(c) The millennium message was placed on the United Nations English-language millennium Web site in print, video and audio formats. The inauguration of the French-language millennium Web site was tied to that release;

(d) Two millennium television interviews with the Secretary-General were arranged: with a consortium of broadcasters, including the British Broadcasting Corporation's World Service, in 60 countries, on 16 December; and with the Cable News Network on 31 December. These interviews continued to be broadcast worldwide into the first week of the new year;

(e) The Department arranged for the windows of the Secretariat building to be lit up to read "UN 2000" on the evenings of 27 to 29 December 1999, attracting television coverage in the metropolitan area and photo reportage in many countries. Photographs of this display were distributed to wire agencies, newspapers and United Nations information centres, and were made available immediately on the Internet, where they were downloadable by media. They were extensively reproduced for publication, including on the front pages of many major daily newspapers;

(f) To build momentum among civil society, a briefing on United Nations millennium events was held on 16 December 1999 for several hundred non-governmental organizations. It featured a panel discussion at Headquarters, with live video links to representatives assembled in Geneva, San Francisco and Vienna;

(g) "Visions of the new millennium", an exhibit of 300 works by young artists, photographers and writers from around the world, was opened by Nane Annan, the wife of the Secretary-General, on 17 December 1999 and remained on view until 28 February 2000, attracting many thousands of visitors;

(h) A poster, featuring the painting "Dawn in the new millennium" by the Spanish artist Cristóbal Gabarrón, was distributed through the United Nations information centres in early January. It was formally launched on 15 February 2000, at an event hosted at Headquarters by the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations and the Earth Pledge Foundation, at which each Member State received a signed, limited edition print of the painting;

(i) The *UN Chronicle* published the first two issues of its millennium series, the first entitled "A Millennium of Minds", in which scholars and thinkers had written on "What the world expects of its United Nations in the new century"; and the second entitled "A century in retrospect", in which eminent contributors addressed specific ways in which the Organization had made a difference to the lives of people everywhere.

B. Planned outreach for the Millennium Summit

6. The release of the Secretary-General's millennium report, expected at the end of March 2000, is a crucial opportunity to raise awareness among media about the Millennium Summit and inform them about the main issues it will address. Immediately after the Secretary-General presents the report to the General Assembly, he will launch it to the media at a press conference in New York, as well as by live video link at simultaneous events in key cities worldwide. The Secretary-General's statement and press conference will be made available by satellite to broadcasters and on the Internet. A video news release will be prepared and distributed, as well as an advance press kit with background materials. The report will also be produced as an attractive publication with graphics and boxes illustrating success stories.

7. The information campaign around the Millennium Summit will build on a strategic calendar of official United Nations events and observances. It will also take into account other, unofficial gatherings of civil society at the United Nations, including the

Millennium Forum of non-governmental organizations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Conference of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments, as well as the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders.

8. In the weeks immediately prior to the Millennium Summit itself, outreach will be undertaken with major press groups to ensure worldwide coverage of the event and the issues on which it will deliberate. The presence of many Heads of State and Government is expected to generate considerable press interest, which will be harnessed to yield in-depth reporting on the issues and to highlight the constructive and indispensable role that the United Nations will play in the twenty-first century. A press kit and broadcast materials will be developed and distributed.

III. Promotional campaign

9. In conjunction with outreach on the Millennium Summit itself, the Department of Public Information will conduct a promotional campaign with the overall objective of linking the day-to-day work of the United Nations with the aspirations of people everywhere, and thus positioning the Organization as relevant and effective. Ordinary people, especially the young, as well as opinion-makers who can help spread the message in both the developed and developing world, are the target audience. Using the strong, proactive slogan that "The UN Works", it will tell the United Nations story in a simple, appealing way. While the campaign will start in the lead-up to the Millennium Summit, it will continue after the event as a central part of a long-term communications strategy to increase awareness of the work of the United Nations and its positive impact on people's daily lives, and thus to increase grass-roots support.

10. As appropriate to the new century, the Department will make extensive use of new technologies, such as the Internet, in the campaign. The campaign will also be innovative in reaching out directly to people, rather than relying on redisseminators to cover the United Nations. In addition to utilizing the vast potential of the Internet and television to directly reach people, the campaign will use, for example, the visual impact of posters displayed in public venues, bus shelters or billboards to communicate its message to as large an audience as possible. The choice of media and means of communication will be determined by the local conditions in each country.

11. To put a human face on the work of the United Nations, the campaign will show ordinary people engaged in some activity with an accompanying message that "The UN Works". Promotional materials will illustrate how the United Nations works to fight poverty, hunger and disease, to promote development, literacy and women's equality and to protect the environment. Some materials will feature local or international celebrities. All materials will direct the viewer to a special Internet page on the United Nations Web site, which will explain in more detail how the Organization makes an impact on that particular issue.

12. United Nations information centres and offices will play a key role in adapting the campaign's message to local realities by selecting relevant issues and choosing appropriate visual images. Partnerships will be sought with non-governmental groups and media organizations to assist in placing advertising. The specialized agencies, programmes and funds of the United Nations system are also expected to play an important role in the millennium promotional campaign, including through their field offices around the world. Inter-agency efforts will be coordinated through the Joint United Nations Information Committee.

13. "The UN Works" approach will be incorporated into many promotional materials, activities and events for the 2000-2001 period. Links will be sought with key events leading up to the Millennium Summit, such as the special sessions of the General Assembly on women and social development. For the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, planned for 2001, promotional materials could use the slogan "The United Nations works to fight racism".

14. The United Nations pavilion at the Hannover World Exposition 2000 will also adapt "The UN Works" approach as a unifying theme in developing a joint presentation for the activities of the United Nations system. Some 40 million to 50 million people are expected to visit the Exposition, making it a major avenue for public outreach in the millennium year.

15. It is expected that, in the long term, the strategic vision and implementation of the millennium promotional campaign will contribute towards a central

theme of the Secretary-General's United Nations reform plan, i.e., the need to bring the Organization closer to the peoples of the world.